

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 130

By Pitts

A RESOLUTION to recognize Russel A. Church on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those citizens who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm and have distinguished themselves, through their extraordinary efforts, as dedicated professionals and exemplary community leaders; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable person is Russel A. Church, who has devotedly served the 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, composed of Montgomery and Robertson Counties, for more than seventeen years; he recently retired from public service; and

WHEREAS, while Mr. Church's presence in the courts of Montgomery and Robertson Counties will be deeply missed, he has left an indelible legacy of service to the highest principles of our judicial system; and

WHEREAS, a proud native son of the Great State of Michigan, Mr. Church is a graduate of Northern Michigan University which conferred upon him the degree of Bachelor of Science in Political Science and Speech *magna cum laude* in 1979; he is also a graduate of the Chicago-Kent College of Law, which conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Jurisprudence *cum laude* in 1982; and

WHEREAS, he served in active duty in the United States Army as a judge advocate from 1982 to 1986, assigned to the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault); and

WHEREAS, in 1985, Captain Church deployed with Task Force 3-502 to the Sinai Peninsula in support of the Multinational Force and Observers mission which observed and reported Egyptian and Israeli activities in accordance with the Treaty of Peace between the Arab Republic of Egypt and the State of Israel of March 26, 1979, and the Protocol Establishing the Multinational Force and Observers of August 3, 1981; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Church annually remembers the tragic aircraft crash in Gander, Newfoundland, on December 12, 1985, that took the lives of 248 of his comrades-in-arms; and

WHEREAS, he served in the United States Army Reserve from 1981 to 1982, and again from 1987 to 2001, as a judge advocate, ultimately retiring from service at the rank of Major; and

WHEREAS, upon his release from active duty in 1987, Mr. Church entered the private practice of law in Clarksville, joining the firm of Fleming, Rudolph, Ross, and Fendley; and

WHEREAS, he joined the Office of the District Public Defender, 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, upon its creation in September of 1989 and served as one of the original public defenders in the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Church represented thousands of accused citizens by conducting more than 300 jury trials and thousands of bench trials and hearings in the ensuing seventeen years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Church served as the Acting District Public Defender from February 2003 to April 2004, while the District Public Defender was mobilized and deployed with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) to Operation Iraqi Freedom; he not only maintained his already incredibly large workload, but assumed the administrative duties of the office; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments aside, Russel A. Church is fortunate to share both love and companionship with his wife, Christine, and their children, Caleb, Zachary, and Hannah; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Church is an excellent chef; and

WHEREAS, a consummate professional whose counsel is valued by all who know him, Mr. Church is an inspiration to his colleagues who admire him for his professional expertise and his exceptional service to the public; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Russel A. Church has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his colleagues and fellow citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we extend to Russel A. Church our heartfelt wishes for a happy and

fulfilling retirement and every continued success in his future endeavors, and we thank him for his unwavering dedication and substantial contributions as a lawyer, counselor-at-law, and public servant for the people of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.